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No. 401

# THE CAT AND THE CHERUB

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By

C. B. FERNALD

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# THE CAT AND THE CHERUB

Produced on October 30, 1897, at the Lyric Theatre, London, with the following cast of characters :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Wing Shee . . . | *Mr. Holbrook Blinn.* |
| Chim Fang . . . | *Mr. Richard Ganthony.* |
| Hoo King . . . | *Mr. Frederick Volpé.* |
| Wing Sun Luey . . | *Mr. Edwin Morrison.* |
| Ah Yoi . . . . | *Miss Ruth Benson.* |
| Hwah Kwee . . . | *Miss Alethea Luce.* |
| Hoo Chee. . . . | *Miss Hilda [illegible]ter.* |

# THE CAT AND THE CHERUB

SCENE.—*A street in Chinatown, San Francisco (see plan). The buildings are of brick, generally of two storeys, much dilapidated. The woodwork, painted once in bright colours, has never been painted again and the colours are now dim and harmonious. The lower parts of the walls are more or less covered with red papers, bearing notices in black Chinese characters. Shop signs are in gold letters on a green or black background. Each door has a small red placard with a name in red letters. In front of each door half a large potato holds incense sticks, which are burning in honour of the New Year. Chinese lanterns suspended from various points. The entrance to Chim Fang's cellar may be either down a trap, with steps, or through a door at the same point. There is a light in the window of the gambling house, and in the window of Hoo King's house.*

## SCENE I

*Moonlight. Some men pass* R.U. *to* L.U.

*Men inside gambling den shout:* "Ichi—ichi! Ni—ni! San—san! Shi—shi! Ichi—shee! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!"

*Some men cross* L.U. *to* R.U.

*Shouts and laughter repeated in gambling den.*

*Shriek of Opium Fiend heard from cellar.*

*Enter* CHIM FANG, *pushing* OPIUM FIEND *up cellar steps.*

OPIUM FIEND. More opium! More opium! More—— !!

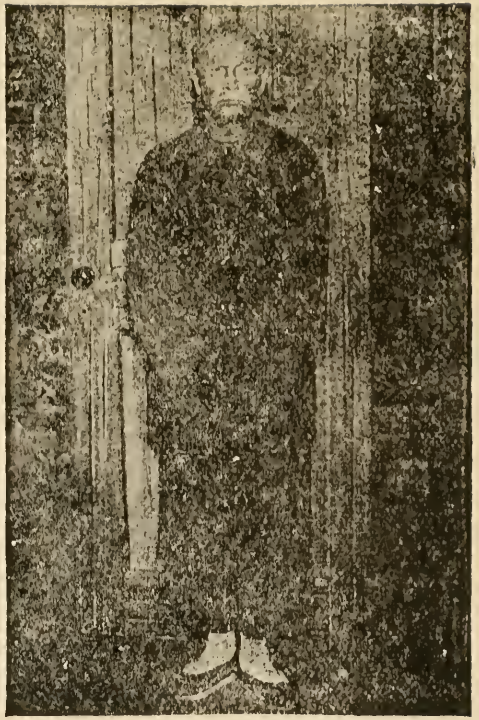
CHIM FANG. Still! Still, you rat! I'll give you no more! Go smoke at Man Chow's—he has an iron cell for such as you! (*Throws him off* L.) Lie there, then! I'll have no more white men going mad in my place!

(*Two men, followed by a woman, cross* R.U. *to* L.U. CHIM FANG *looks to house* R.)

The Old Year's Night! What have I to thank the gods for on this Old Year's Night? My debts are double my ownings! (*Repeat shouts and laughter, as above; he turns towards source of them.*) Yes, if I had not played that game so often I, too, should have good clothes for the holidays. (*Turns to house* R.) And here they celebrate with rich food and wine and laughter. Make merry, Hoo King—rejoice that your son has passed six Old Year's Nights—though you be hated for your avarice. I could stuff that boy of yours into this hole beneath the street; I could make you pay my messenger a ransom for him! I do not fear your good-luck cat. (AH YOI *appears at window,* R.) I'd take the cat, too! (*Sees* AH YOI; *she draws back from sight.*) I wish I had that handsome niece of his. I'd make so profitable a slave of her that I should be a mandareen some day—back in my own Canton!

(*Several men, as if from gambling den, cross* L.U. *to* R.U. *and exeunt.* HWAH KWEE *opens door* R.; *draws back at hearing them; enters when they are out of sight.*) (*Light out—window* L.)

WING SHEE.



CHIM FANG.

HWAH KWEE. Chim Fang, don't be angry with me. I could not come sooner. Hoo King watches us as if we were money!

CHIM FANG. You are! Did you get me Ah Yoi's fan?

HWAH KWEE. No!

CHIM FANG. You say this doctor's son gave Ah Yoi a fan, with love verses written on it. Let me show Hoo King that fan and we'll have no more doctors' sons gadding here. Hm—Wing Sun Luey—pretty boy! Get me that fan!

HWAH KWEE. I cannot! She is kind to me, Chim Fang; I cannot steal from her!

CHIM FANG. Stay here, then. I'll not run away with you. I'll not marry you. Stay and be a miserable slave and grow old—old—old! Will you get me that fan?

HWAH KWEE. Yes——!

(*They hear some one approaching* L.U. *Exit* HWAH KWEE, *house* R. CHIM FANG *goes to cellar steps. Enter* WING SHEE, L.U.)

CHIM FANG. The learned doctor walks late to-night. Most honourable friend, may the New Year bring you joys enough to kill your enemies with envy. (*Salutes with clasped hands.*)

WING SHEE (*salutes*). My oft-proclaiméd friend, may the New Year bring you every commodity you deserve.

CHIM FANG. I need all that (*ingratiatingly*). Learned doctor, will you sit here? I would claim a favour of your friendship. Learned doctor, you who read the stars and hold communication with the gods, I would have a coal from the fire of your wit to warm my honesty. Will you sit here? (*They sit on bench.*) I hear a Street God coming. (*Enter Policeman,* R.U.) These blue monsters of the city flatten their noses on men's most private matters. I hate them!

WING SHEE. Why? Have we not our secret

courts of justice, our secret passages beneath the ground ?

CHIM FANG. And I fear that I shall some day be brought before those courts—on charge of being too honest, learned doctor !—and therefore too poor ! A word of wisdom on that, illustrious friend.

WING SHEE (*as the Policeman comes down*). Chim Fang, a wise saying is soon said. Look at the man whom lust of gold, of flesh, of power, makes glitter like false tinsel. Then look at his dead body. I tell you no such man has ever ended life, but—in the secret chambers of his mind and by the measure of his crimes (*exit Policeman,* R.)—he died in horrid fright.

CHIM FANG. Ugh ! (*as he shivers and they rise*). How such a man might quake, when even I must shiver when you speak of it. Good-night, most learned friend (*as* WING SHEE *crosses* R.). I find good morals in an early bed. (*Exit, cellar.*)

WING SHEE. Take care you do not find them crawling out when you crawl in.

CHIM FANG (*his head appearing from steps*). I might prate more easily of virtue, if I had the gods corrupted on my side ! (*Exit, steps.*)

(AH YOI *reappears at window* R.)

AH YOI. The learned Doctor Wing Shee ! Surely I do no harm to speak to you, most wise and reverend !

WING SHEE. The beautiful Ah Yoi !

AH YOI. O, kind, fatherly sir, send me some magic powder—that at least I dream of happiness !

WING SHEE. Unhappy—with to-morrow everybody's birthday ? (*Tosses up red packet.*) Sweeter dreams to you ! But why unhappy ?

AH YOI. O, sir, in this house all of us are grains of sand, except my uncle's little son, Hoo Chee.

WING SHEE. I have a son myself, Ah Yoi. What do you think of Wing Sun Luey, Ah Yoi ?

AH YOI. I—I——

HOO KING (*within*). Ah Yoi!

WING SHEE. Well, then——?

AH YOI. I——

HOO KING (*within*). Ah Yoi! (*She closes the window, exit.*)

WING SHEE. Then I will try to marry him to you.

CHIM FANG (*his head at cellar steps*). What did you say, learned doctor?

WING SHEE. Only making verses to the moon. Can you think of anything that rhymes with eavesdropper?

(*Exit* L.U. BLACK OUT. CURTAIN.)

## SCENE II

*Rise of Curtain. Daylight.*

*Man off* L. *Shouts: Nah! Nah!*

CHIM FANG *enters from cellar, smoking pipe.*

*Enter Man* I, *with a tray and bowls on his head shouting: Nah! Stops before* CHIM FANG.

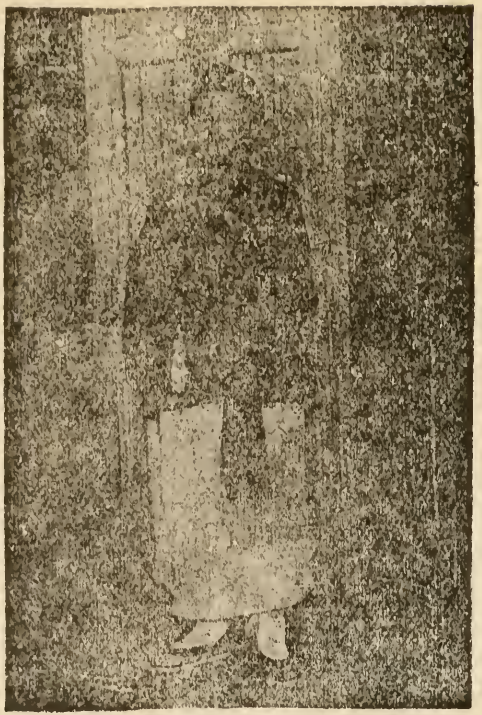
CHIM FANG (*examining wares*). Fresh bamboo shoots? I cannot afford stale ones. Hong Kong shrimps in wine? Who buys such luxuries? (*Man crosses to* R.; *enter* HOO KING *house* R.; *sends Man into his house.*) Hoo King lives on them. When I am through with him he will eat more frugally. Most honourable Hoo King, may the New Year fetch all men to love you as I do.—(*Salutes.*)

HOO KING (*salutes*). May all the opium in China-town, my dear Chim Fang, pass stickily through your fingers. (*Both salute.*)

CHIM FANG. Hoo King, it is an extraordinary sum of money you ask, as a present from him who marries your niece; but Ah Yoi's beauty stirs me so that I will give it. Wish me a son to worship at my grave!

HOO KING. What? you have as much? What modesty of clothes, Chim Fang—and this the New Year's day!

CHIM FANG. Sir, I am richer than my laundry-man suspects, or he would come and rob me of what



HOO KING.

SUN LUEY.

I owe him. (AH YOI *appears at door.*) For a woman with natural feet, Hoo King, it is a great sum you ask. A woman who can walk without assistance gads about too much alone. I shall have to keep her locked.

HOO KING. Be wise and keep all women locked.

AH YOI. My uncle, I *wish* that I might see the paper dragon walk, in the New Year's procession!

HOO KING. A foolish woman wastes her time in wishes. (AH YOI *turns away.*) Stay, Ah Yoi.

(*Enter two men* R.U.; *they stay up tunnel.*)

Chim Fang, may the next New Year bring you a son to worship at your grave. (*Goes up tunnel.*) Here comes the most beloved man in Chinatown, to read the Book of Fate concerning my Hoo Chee. (*He comes down, as enter* WING SHEE *and* SUN LUEY.) The learned Doctor Wing Shee! Most admirable doctor, may the New Year fetch you twelve moons farther from death! (*Both salute.*)

WING SHEE. When Hoo King took to trade the noble art of words took grievous loss. Vast sir, we two have lusty sons to worship at our graves; we cannot fear to die. And he who fears not death may never fear to live. Your portly front reminds me of the high divinities, and they remind me of a prayer I sent aloft for you just now, in the church of the foreign devils.

CHIM FANG. The church of the white devils?

AH YOI. The Christian Church—they teach many good things.

HOO KING. A husband shall teach you to forget them. The learned Doctor Wing Shee, mumbling to barbarous gods——?

WING SHEE. Hoo King, each of all the clashing creeds has said to me: "Insure your soul with us—or you are damned!" And so I have a little bit on each of them. For in the end, one of these religions may be right, by dint of having swallowed all the

others. And so this morning I have burned rare incense to Confucius, given golden painted candles to Matreya Buddha, and sacrificed a little yellow dog to Lao Tse. Then I went to the foreign devils' temple and sat in a pen with sundry foreign devils—all as devoutly sleepy as I myself; and for one year's safety on my soul, contributed a dollar.

CHIM FANG. A whole dollar——?

WING SHEE. A whole dollar. For if these foreign devils have a god as mighty as they say, then was the dollar wisely spent; but if, on the other hand, their hopes prove slightly false, their reasoning slightly defective—so was the dollar. (*Enter three women,* R.U.)

HOO KING. O learned man! I'll fetch my Cherub to you, quickly. He's gone to buy a cuttle-fish, to feed his good-luck cat. (*Exit,* L.U.)

CHIM FANG. Wasting cuttlefish—on cats! Good doctor, if you could cure my malady, I gladly would owe you a dollar. Every night I dream of roast pigs, running—and I cannot catch one!

WING SHEE. Let me see your tongue. (*Looks at it; beckons to* SUN LUEY, *who is absorbed in* AH YOI; *she prompts* SUN LUEY, *who gives black plasters to* WING SHEE, *who claps them on* CHIM FANG'S *temples.*) Now see if you can walk. (CHIM FANG *goes* L.) His stomach is as empty as a last year's nest.

AH YOI. Learned doctor, I have such a queerness at the heart! Sometimes, when I look up, it hops—like a frog! (*Glances at* SUN LUEY.)

SUN LUEY. And I, father, the very same complaint!

WING SHEE (*to* AH YOI). I'll hear your heart. (*Listens at her right shoulder.*)

AH YOI. Why, at the foreign devils' school they said my heart was here! (*Left side.*)

WING SHEE. It may have been. A woman's heart shifts back and forth, according to the moon. This malady is incident to youth. The remedy, the oldest in the world; and if I can, I'll get it for you. (CHIM

FANG *laughs mockingly;* SUN LUEY *starts as if to threaten him.*) My son! the wooden cheek, the eye of porcelain! It is immodest for a man to wear his feelings on his face. You have too much of your mother in you; no, your father loves you too much to find a fault in you.

SUN LUEY. As deeply as my mother loved her mother, so do I love my father; and may I perish if I once prove disobedient, or love my wife so much as I love you. (*Enter* HOO KING, L.U.)

HOO KING. Ah (*looks off* L.), the little god of love has come! (*Enter* HOO CHEE, *with his cat, followed by* HWAH KWEE, *and danced down* C. *by* HOO KING.) He's shooting up like a young bamboo! And lusty, too, eh, doctor? You say the gods decree that I shall never have another son. Why, then, so be it, if the gods preserve Hoo Chee. For they could never make another like him!

WING SHEE. Ah, my little bunch—your good-luck cat?

AH YOI. O, he's very grave in company; but last night he tied the tail of his cat to the queue of his father.

HWAH KWEE (*who has stolen* L.). Chim Fang——?

CHIM FANG. Don't speak to me here!

HOO KING. Come here, Hwah Kwee! Now, learned doctor, read the book of stars and tell me Hoo Chee's future. If you find evil, I wish I had never been born!

WING SHEE (*receives book from* SUN LUEY; *from book reads certain Chinese words written therein; pauses*). This is the first day of the New Year. Has every one present sacrificed soap to the water god? (*All bow but* CHIM FANG. WING SHEE *motions to* SAN LUEY, *who draws a circle with chalk around* CHIM FANG; *all take one step farther away from* CHIM FANG.) Now let us chant together Amitahba's sacred name, to guard from error my pronouncings. Omatofa! (*all continue to chant this word in unison, while:*) I

see six tranquil moons. In the seventh moon he falls in love with a maiden too much older. For this administer a draught of henbane tea, in which there has been drowned a fighting cock. All this is good; but in the first moon a dangerous happening shall fill his father's heart with cruel woe. (HOO KING *stops chanting.*) I see two men lie dead, and one of them was honest and the other foul. Hoo Chee comes forth unharmed. (*All stop chanting.*) (*Exeunt gradually the supernumerary men and women.*)

HOO KING (*joyfully*). Omatofa!

WING SHEE. My friend, a better augury than last year.

HOO KING. But no—those dead men!

WING SHEE. Why, enemies, perhaps! (*He and* HOO KING *bend over the child.* WING SHEE *then picks him up playfully; during this* SUN LUEY *gives* HWAH KWEE *a letter which she hands to* AH YOI, *who exit, house* R.) Come with me to Ping Fah Lo's, and cheer yourself with a bowl of pig's blood! (*Goes to bottom of tunnel; waits.*)

HOO KING. Hwah Kwee, all the town will throng along the line to see the paper dragon walk. At such a time my enemies might choose to harm my boy. Chim Fang has heard them say it could be done. Keep Hoo Chee here. Hoo Chee, if you stray off. the street gods will eat you! Woman, if any harm befalls my boy, I'll sell you—a thousand miles from here I'll sell you! (*Turns to* WING SHEE.) That augury of dead men!

WING SHEE. Come, what shall we eat with our blood?

HOO KING. I cannot eat—there's too much blood in the augury.

WING SHEE. Why, Ping Fah has some linnets' eggs—very fresh—only fifty days from Tartary! (*Exit,* L.U., *followed by* HOO KING *and* SUN LUEY.)

HWAH KWEE. You only play with me. Your eyes are always on Ah Yoi!

CHIM FANG. I? She wears a worth of jewels more than I could buy. Beware of Hoo King with your foolish jealousy. Where is that fan!

HWAH KWEE. I will not steal for you. You want Ah Yoi. I hate you! (*Exit, taking* HOO CHEE, *house* R.)

CHIM FANG. Bah! (*Exit, cellar.*) (*Enter* AH YOI, *house* R.)

AH YOI (*by corner, reading letter, as enter* SUN LUEY, L.U. *He comes and stands around corner from her*). "To-day, if your eyes be as true as your face is pure, tell me your heart with your lips. For the things that my father can do are little short of godlike!"

SUN LUEY. Ah Yoi, let me hear you speak to me once!

AH YOI. Sh! O, do look the other way! How dreadful that I, a well-bred girl, should speak to a man.

SUN LUEY. My father has gone to ask your uncle. I want you for my wife. Is it good, Ah Yoi?

AH YOI. What if your father fail, Sun Luey? I almost thought Chim Fang had found a way to tempt my uncle.

SUN LUEY. My father—fail——?

AH YOI. My uncle cares for nothing but money —and for his little son.

SUN LUEY. My father never fails, my beautiful one! How strange, Ah Yoi, that you, a woman, can read and write!

AH YOI. O, yes, Sun Luey, and add up numbers. When I am yours, you will teach me even more?

SUN LUEY. I promise. But, indeed, men will laugh at me.

AH YOI. And you must promise to love me more than you love your father.

SUN LUEY. No! That is a sin you learned from foreign devils. We should both be damned for it.

AH YOI. I did not mean it, Luey. But I shall love you more than I love my uncle, whether it be

right or wrong. I—— (*Both take alarm at some one's approach,* L.U. *She hurries into the house,* R. *Enter* WING SHEE, L.U.)

WING SHEE (*divining what has happened*). The turtle doves mate early this spring!

SUN LUEY. Why back so soon, father?

WING SHEE. I have spoken to Hoo King. He says he has promised Ah Yoi to Chim Fang.

SUN LUEY. Chim Fang? That man's a barber's son—a sodden beast! I'll wear a hatchet in my sleeve for him!

WING SHEE (*always calm*). My son, the wooden cheek, the eye of porcelain. Look at your father. In sixty-five years your father never has been so boiling with rage—as he is this moment. Sun Luey, you love Ah Yoi—I dare not say how much.

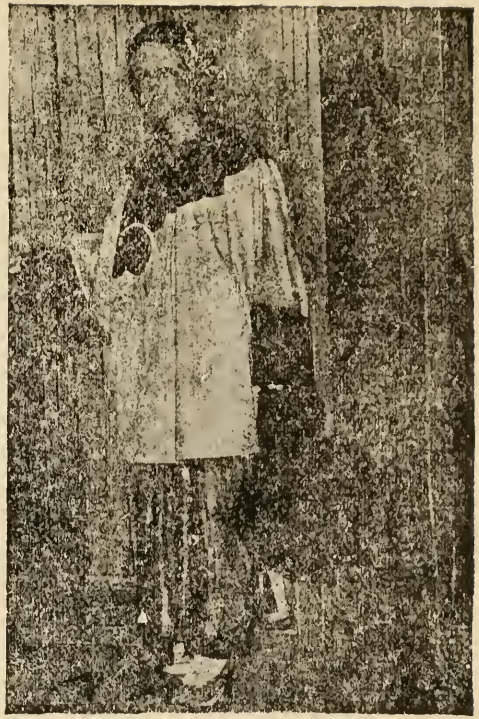
SUN LUEY. I love my father more—I told her so.

WING SHEE. Emperor of Western Heaven, can you look upon such filial piety and yet refuse our prayer? Chim Fang shall not marry Ah Yoi. Chim Fang has no money. He under-eats; and I never knew a rich man yet who did not sometimes over-eat. Now I command you: whosoever has an emotion, let him keep it under cover, lest it catch cold and perish. I go to a pleasant function; a list of friends have given me a richly lacquered coffin, saying that my services have kept them out of theirs. I go to drink long life with them and try my coffin on. (*Goes up.*) Sun Luey, if the new coffin fits comfortably, you shall have my old one!

SUN LUEY. O, father! (*Exit* WING SHEE, L.U. *Gong heard off* L. SUN LUEY *goes to cellar steps;* HWAH KWEE *comes from house,* R.) Chim Fang! Chim Fang, has Hoo King promised you Ah Yoi? He says so. (*Enter* CHIM FANG, *cellar.*)

(*Enter a man and two women,* R.U.; *they stop at back.*)

AH YOI.



HWAH KWEE.

HWAH KWEE. Oh, the black villain! Chim Fang promised me! He lied to me! (*Gong.*)

CHIM FANG. I lied to no one. When Ah Yoi is Chim Yoi, Hwah Kwee may be our servant!

HWAH KWEE. Servant, you snake! I dare not tell Hoo King; he'd beat me—he'd kill me! O, how you lied to me! (*Gong.*)

SUN LUEY. You shall never marry Ah Yoi! The gods will never let you live to marry Ah Yoi! (*Exit,* L.U.)

(*Enter two women,* L.U., *and two men,* R.U.—*stop at back.*)

CHIM FANG (*to Sun Luey*). You doll! (*Gong.*)

HWAH KWEE. Ah Yoi knows your plot. Though they starve her, though they beat her to a pulp, she will not marry you! (*Gong.*)

CHIM FANG. I'll sell her out—the handsome flesh! I'll take the white devils' nonsense out of her! (*Gong.*) To-day the dragon walks! (*Exit,* R.) (*Enter two men* R.U.*; they stop at back. Gong and cymbals.*)

HWAH KWEE. I will see the dragon walk! The worst of slaves may see the dragon walk! (*Starts up;* HOO CHEE *follows; returns.*) If you stray from this spot the dragon will come and eat you! Stay there!

(*Gong and cymbals, ad libitum, off* L.U., *as a procession passes. She runs up.* CHIM FANG *appears at cellar steps. He tempts the child with an orange. The child runs to him. He seizes the child, which screams, and carries down his cellar.* HWAH KWEE *has seen the child pass and she struggles until she gets out of the crowd, and comes down.*)

(*Enter* HOO KING, L.U.) (*All men and women at back, exeunt* L.U.)

HOO KING. Woman, I do not see my child. Where is he?

HWAH KWEE. He—he went there (L.). Hoo Chee! Hoo Chee! He went there! (*Gong, etc., diminuendo off* L.)

HOO KING. Hoo Chee! Hoo Chee!

HWAH KWEE. Hoo Chee!

HOO KING. He cannot have passed the crowd there! (L.) Where is he?

HWAH KWEE. He's gone!

HOO KING. Gone? The boy's lost! He's stolen! Hoo Chee! (*Enter three men,* L.U.) Help, help, friends, they've stolen my boy! Go, go, hunt for my boy! (*Exeunt the three men,* R.U.) This swine has let them steal him! (*Strikes* HWAH KWEE *on "swine"—she falls.*) Hoo Chee! (*Exit* L.) Hoo Chee! Hoo Chee! (*Enter* CHIM FANG, R.U.)

HWAH KWEE. Pity—Kwanyin—pity! Hoo Chee —Hoo Chee——!

CHIM FANG. What's this? Hoo Chee lost?

HWAH KWEE. Chim Fang, for Kwanyin's sake take me away! You swore upon your soul you would. Hoo King will kill me! Chim Fang!

CHIM FANG. Get off, you faithless woman—dishonest—false to your charge! I'll not look at you!

(*Enter* HOO KING, L.)

HOO KING. By every evil star, I'll sell you! Strip off those ornaments, you barber's wench! (*Pulls pins from her hair, throws her in at house* R.) Chim Fang, do you remember the bloody augury? What can I do? (*Enter* WING SHEE *and* SUN LUEY, R.) (*Enter two men,* R.U.)

CHIM FANG. Hoo King, such a holy thing to me is friendship that I will risk my life to save your boy. I think your enemies of the Sing Song Tong have taken him. There will be blood, indeed, Hoo King, and blood is slippery matter. (*Enter* AH YOI, *house* R.) But if I return alive and bring you back your boy, will you make a present of your niece to me?

AH YOI. Not unless I'm dead! (*Enter two men,* R.U.)

HOO KING. I'll make a present of my niece to any man who brings me back my boy!

SUN LUEY. Will you give her to me, if I bring back your boy?

HOO KING. Yes, and with jewels to make her glitter like a goddess! My noble Chim Fang! Scatter, friends! If any poor man will prove himself my benefactor, now—O, now! (*Exit* L.U. *Exeunt two men,* R.U.; *and two* L.U.) Hoo Chee! Hoo Chee!

SUN LUEY. Father——!

WING SHEE (*after a pause*). Cool veins! Cool veins! The wooden cheek—the eye of porcelain. I'll grease the gods for you. (*Goes cellar opening.*) "My noble Chim Fang"——! I would not have you come to grief. I would rather bring grief to you. (*Exit,* L.)

SUN LUEY. Ah Yoi—I'm going to find the boy! A kiss before I go! Let custom fly—a kiss!

AH YOI. O, no woman ever did such things! Luey, I wish you would not go. Those men with hidden knives and pistols! I cannot lose you!

SUN LUEY. Think of my reward! Think of our little home: my dear old father, you and I—all in one little house! Yoi, my beautiful! (*Kisses her.*)

AH YOI. Oh! What a foreign devil thing to do! You mustn't! (*He is about to repeat, when they hear some one; she exit house,* R. *He exit* R. *Enter* CHIM FANG, R.U., *with a letter.*)

CHIM FANG. "Send the money before to-morrow noon, or you shall receive the boy's head in a basket!" (*Puts letter at* HOO KING'S *door,* R.) Now, rich avarice, I'll have your niece for nothing, and I'll have your money, too! (*Exit, cellar. Enter* HWAH KWEE, *house* R., *with bundle—picks up letter.*)

HWAH KWEE. Chim Fang! I wish I did not know your step so well. I wish I could read. It's for Hoo King, anyway. Then let it fail! (*Tears it*

*up.*) I'll give myself to the Christians—they cannot be worse than you! (*Runs off* R.U.) (*Enter* Hoo King, *followed by Man* 1, L.)

Hoo King. The woman was in league with them! They have bribed her. I'll lock her in! (*Locks house* R.) I'll beat the truth from her when I come back. Come, friend! Hoo Chee! (*Exit* R.) Hoo Chee!

(Sun Luey *enters,* L.U.—*listens at walls,* R. *Enter* Chim Fang, *cellar.*)

Chim Fang. Seek and seek, you hot young fool. Too keen a scent will bring you to the smell of dust! Stick to your father's coat sleeve, pretty boy!

Sun Luey. I'll search your cellar next.

Chim Fang. Young man, I do not like your manner. A more apologetic way besuits your youth.

Sun Luey. I will not change my manner. I'll search your secret burrows as I have the rest.

Chim Fang. Hold off! Find business of your own, or I will find it for you!

Sun Luey. I'll find it here! (*Knocks him over, exit, cellar;* Chim Fang *follows him down.*) Hoo Chee! Hoo Chee! Hoo——! (*As if hurt.* Sun Luey *staggers up the steps, bringing the child without the Cat.*) Yoi—Yoi——! I've found the boy! You're mine now! Yoi——!

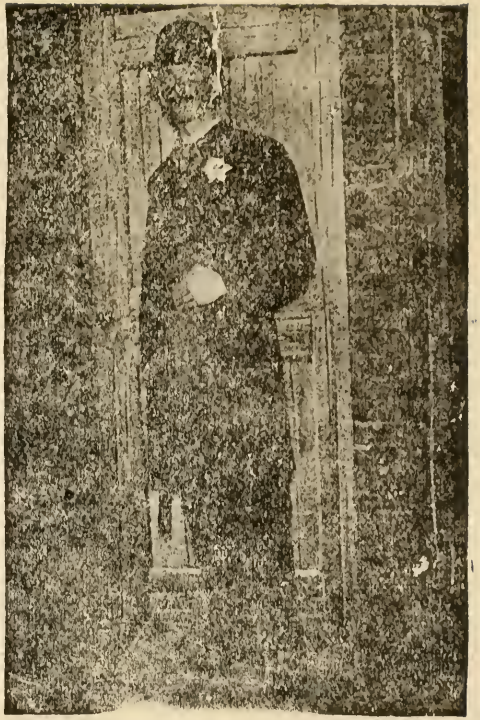
Ah Yoi (*in house*). Sun Luey——

(Sun Luey *has to let the child down, as* Chim Fang *enters from the cellar, brandishing knife.* Sun Luey *leans on the child, suffering.*) It's all well, now! Yoi! (Chim Fang *stabs him, child screams.*) Ah! (*Exit* Chim Fang, *cellar, carrying child.*) (Sun Luey *falls, down* L.)

Ah Yoi (*rattling door, crescendo*). Sun Luey! Luey—speak to me—speak to me! Luey—Luey—help! Help! (*Continues to call.*)

(*Enter* Hoo King, R.U., *shoving* Hwah Kwee *before him. Also several women.*)

HOO CHEE.



THE POLICEMAN.

HOO KING. Thief! Thief! I paid six hundred dollars for you! And when you steal yourself from me you steal six hundred dollars!

HWAH KWEE (*at sight of* SUN LUEY'S *body*). Aah —— ! (*Enter several men,* R. *and* L.U.)

HOO KING. Ah! Sun Luey—Sun Luey! Help! They've killed a man before my very door! They steal my child, and then they kill a man, before my very door! (*Unlocks door; enter* AH YOI, *with scream*)

AH YOI. Luey—— ! (*Then she goes and kneels beside body; also* HWAH KWEE *and one of the women.*) Luey—speak—— ! My golden one—my golden one! (*Sees he is dead.*) Ah, his soul has lost its body! Call to it—call to it!

THE THREE WOMEN (*as enter* WING SHEE, L.U.). Come back! Come back! Sun Luey—come back—— !

(*At the name,* WING SHEE *pushes through the crowd; kneels at body; all wait for his verdict, as his head goes to* LUEY'S *breast.*)

(WING SHEE *shows that his son is dead. Rises with tremendous effort for self-control. Achieves control; stands rigid. Enter* CHIM FANG, *running,* R.)

CHIM FANG. O, merciless gods—what villain's crime is this—— ! (WING SHEE'S *head slowly turns; eyes fix on* CHIM FANG. *Tableau.*)

BLACK OUT. CURTAIN.

## SCENE III

*Curtain rises on a foggy midnight. Lanterns out.*

(*Long foghorn off* R. *Enter* HOO KING, *house* R.)

HOO KING. A chill fog, from the lonely sea. (*Foghorn.*) They have a mighty sea-devil, chained to the solid rocks among the surge, to warn the passing ships; and they torture it, even as my misery tortures me. O, sea-devil, where is my little Hoo Chee! (*Foghorn.*) (*Enter* WING SHEE L.U.)

AH YOI (*always a prolonged wail within house* R.). Sun Luey——!

WING SHEE. Sun Luey——! Hoo King, have you heard any news?

HOO KING. No. Have you?

WING SHEE. No. (*Foghorn.*)

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

WING SHEE. Sun Luey——!

HOO KING. "Sun Luey"—the women cry it out of them. She's gone mad. I cannot go mad. (*Foghorn.*) O, deep devil of the sea, have you seen my little Hoo Chee's spirit, floating by to blank infinity?

WING SHEE. Go in, Hoo King. Get rest. To-morrow, meet me here. Put on your coat of mail, Hoo King. Go in. (*Opens door and pushes* HOO KING *in; shuts door. Crosses to bench; sits.*) The *weak* man lingers over yesterday. To-morrow is unborn. The strong man's hour is now. The evil shades have taken from me—my only son. Who

else but Chim Fang could have done it? Though Hwah Kwee burns with jealousy, may not the things she says be true? Chim Fang has a wicked dungeon there beneath our feet—the Emperor of Hell knows what he does with it. If Chim Fang has the boy, then Chim Fang—killed my son! (*Goes cellar steps; listens; hears nothing. Goes down* L.; *kneels, lights prayer paper.*) Emperor of Western Heaven, can you remember such filial piety as his and yet withhold a sign? (*Listens.*) The gods are silent. (*Foghorn.*)

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

WING SHEE. Sun Luey——! (*Rises, suddenly listens. Cat's mew heard. Twice repeated. It leads him to the cellar. Exit* WING SHEE, *cellar. Sound of breaking wood.*) (*Long Foghorn.*)

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

(*Re-enter* WING SHEE, *carrying child and cat, cellar steps. Crosses and puts down child on step of house,* R.) (*Foghorn.*)

WING SHEE (*meanwhile*). Sh! Sh! Sh! Sh!

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

WING SHEE (*about to open door*). Sun Luey——

(*Opens door, puts child inside; closes door; with conviction.*) Chim Fang!

HOO CHEE (*within*). Kwee! Yoi! Papa! Papa!

HOO KING (*within*). Chee! Chee! Chee! My son—my son! Light candles before the goddess of mercy! Hoo Chee! Hoo Chee!

(*Foghorn. Light from* R., *as from part of house, shines now on to bench at* L.C.)

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

HOO KING. Peace, girl—has not my son returned! Chee!— Chee——!

WING SHEE. Sun Luey——! (*Kneels* L.C., *as before: lights prayer paper.*) Spirits of my forefathers,

soon will I offer human sacrifice. Send me Chim Fang!

(*He listens; presently starts; listens; enter* CHIM FANG, L.U.—*sees* WING SHEE, *starts—draws back into the tunnel.* WING SHEE, *without looking, rises and exit* R., *watched by* CHIM FANG.)

CHIM FANG (*coming towards cellar*). Why does he burn prayer papers—on the very spot? Why do I hear nothing from my letter? A miserable night! I wish I lived away from here. (*Starts down cellar; draws back.*) No—suppose there is some one lying in wait for me there——? (*Re-enter* WING SHEE, R.; CHIM FANG *starts and turns his back.*)

WING SHEE. Does Chim Fang scorn me in my sorrow? Even thus do the virtuous shun those whom the gods have punished for their sins!

CHIM FANG. Is that you, Wing Shee? This dreadful deed so sits upon my mind that I walk hither and thither, not knowing where. O, that I had been here, to kill the coward when he raised his hand!

WING SHEE. Such friendly, comforting words, Chim Fang. Come, sit here and let us talk. (*They sit, as in first scene.*) At such a time as this a man draws near his friends as a sick and hooted dog slinks in to shiver by the fire. I am all alone in this icy world, Chim Fang. My son is dead; and old age reaches out its bony hand for me, Chim Fang.

CHIM FANG. Have you learned anything? Do you suspect any one?

WING SHEE. I know.

CHIM FANG. Whom? Tell me whom? (*Foghorn.*)

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

WING SHEE. Sun Luey——!

CHIM FANG. The girl's gone mad! Why don't they gag her! (*Foghorn.*)

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

WING SHEE. Sun Luey——!

CHIM FANG. Tell me who it is, Wing Shee—and you and I will kill him! The night favours the deed. Ugh—a creepy night, somehow.

WING SHEE. Sit close, Chim Fang. What, you wear a coat of mail? Wise in these times. What you say is excellent, Chim Fang. None but you and I shall be there. None but you and I shall know. The murderer shall not die quickly, Chim Fang. He shall see me and hear my voice in his ears. Shall it not be so, Chim Fang? For he killed my son—my only son.

CHIM FANG. Yes, yes—tell me who did it! Let us go now, before sunrise. Let me know that the murderer is dead, then we shall have peace. This thing eats my heart. Tell me who it is; and though he be my dearest friend—what, you fear me?

WING SHEE. No. Speak low; listen; the man stabbed him here. (*Touches* CHIM FANG.) What, are you cold?

CHIM FANG. No. No.

WING SHEE. My son walked there. It was the same man who stole Hoo Chee and carried him underground. He wanted money, to marry Ah Yoi. My son met the man, and the man stabbed him. (CHIM FANG *begins to draw knife, leaning away.*) The man ran down your cellar—out upon another street—came running there, Chim Fang—and threw up his hands and said——

(*Both jump up and* WING SHEE *hits* CHIM FANG *with hatchet as* CHIM FANG *is about to stab him; knife drops;* WING SHEE *begins to strangle* CHIM FANG *with* CHIM FANG'S *queue.*)

He raised his hands to Heaven, I say, and cried: "O merciless gods, what villain's crime is this!"—there, looking on my son, whom he had slain! Him that I slaved in the wars for—dreamt for—planned for—lived for—would have died for! Do you smell

the awful fumes of Hell? See Sun Luey's ghost! It walks in dripping blood! No greater grief than this. He died—and could not speak—to those that loved him!

(*He lets body fall back.*)

It will not bring me back my boy! (*Foghorn.*)

AH YOI. Sun Luey——!

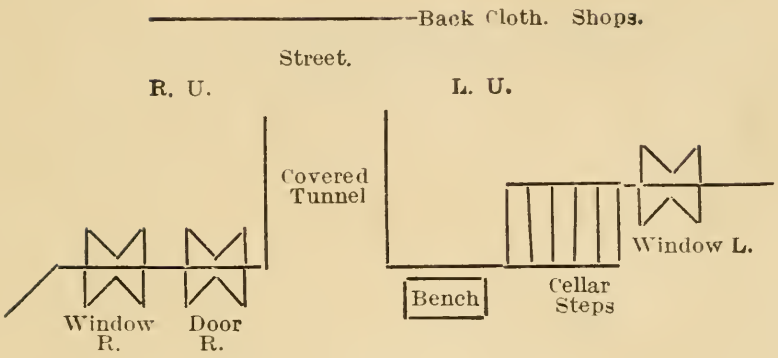
WING SHEE. Sun Luey——! (*Fiercely finishes strangling.*) He died and could not speak—to those that loved him——!

(*Surveys body; hears sound; hurriedly prepares body in sitting position against himself; lights cigar; enter Policeman,* R.U.)

Chim Fang, a wise saying is soon said. Look at the man whom lust of gold, of flesh, of power, makes glitter like false tinsel. Then look at his dead body. I tell you no such man has ever ended life but in the secret chambers of his mind. and by the measure of his crimes, he died in horrid fright.

(*Exit Policeman,* R WING SHEE *goes up tunnel. Body rolls off on ground. Exit* WING SHEE, L.U.)

CURTAIN.




THE CAT AND THE CHERUB. Essentials of the Scene.

# THE CAT AND THE CHERUB

## PROPERTY LIST

Chinese lanterns.

Incense sticks. Bench for two to sit on. Fog-Horn.

WING SHEE: Large horn spectacles. Small butcher's cleaver: the "hatchet." Red packet, size of matchbox, weighted to throw. Cigars, matches, red paper to burn.

CHIM FANG: Knife. Orange. Long pipe with small bowl. Tobacco.

SUN LUEY: Large book. Chalk. Black court plasters, size of halfpenny. Red letter.

HOO CHEE. Black kitten.

HWAH KWEE: Small bundle of clothes, tied in a cloth.

First Supernumerary: Bowls and a tray.

*Printed by* BUTLER & TANNER. *Frome and London.*

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